An Essay
on

The comparative and scientific merits of the Homoepathic Materia Medica.

Respectfully submitted to the Faculty of the

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For the Degree of Doctor of Medicine.

By

Miles. H. Bronson.

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Essay

When the literary amateur leaves the domain of the ordinary sciences, and enters upon the broad field of medical investigation, he is at once traversing a new country with new associates and new objects surrounding him; He has passed the boundary of the exact sciences, and can no longer, like the architect, the astronomer, & the geometrician, with his instruments mark out before him a problem

upon paper, and measure from point to point, from time to time, and from centre to circumference, and thus arrive at medical truth by computation. This data are entirely different from those We has to do with disease, with miasm, with contagion, with mind and matter, things material and immaterial ——

Then in view of this want of precision, the uncertain Knowledge which must necessarily attend the action of drugs under these

circumstances, and
especially when their
action is mingled with
that of a diseased organ-
ism; it is perhaps not sur-
prising that the therapeu-
tical history of the dominant
school
should be anything but
satisfactory to the eye
of science. — By the term
science we mean knowl-
edge classified, arranged,
and reduced to order, so
that it may be easily un-
derstood, and of convenient
application and
reference — By this defi-
nition then let us briefly
examine the materia

medica and therapeutics of the two prevailing schools of medicine, and consider which of the two best fulfills all the conditions, and presents the highest claims as a science, upon the intelligence of a civilized world; whether Homoeopathy is in reality a vagrancy, or a science; a wild chimera of the fancy, or a complete, humane, and God-given system of therapeutics, founded upon the eternal laws of truth.

One of the opponents of Homoeopathy has publicly declared that "the same man is yet to be found who will

testify that Homoeopathy even pretends to the dimensions and dignity of a science". Thus he has added another to the many examples of a lunatic proclaiming all mankind insane except himself.

We compare the two schools of medicine because all systems and pathies can be merged into these two, as far as the action of drugs and a therapeutic law of cure are concerned.

They are those who are guided by the law "similia similibus curantur" on the one hand, and those who have no law to guide them

on the other. For those who deny the truth of similia are compelled also to deny that of "contraria", and hence maintain that drugs have no sure and specific action, no uniform principle of cure.

Thus they are forced to relinquish the very ground-work and basis of a scientific system of therapeutics.

Thus they bid farewell to terra firma, to float forever upon the broad ~~ocean~~ of uncertainty, with the color "regular physician" thrown to the popular breeze, and the cry of

upon an maniac going out to those who dare follow a sure guide, and vindicate a universal law. And this they do under the name and title of science, as though they possessed the right of primogeniture, and we their younger brethren had no part in this estate. But science is certainly more democratic than all this; the wealth which she bestows upon her votaries is not given upon certain conditions of age, or priority of birth, but upon those

of intrinsic worth, and true merit. Besides, the Homoeopathist claims as a medical man and has a right, to all the accumulated knowledge of the medical profession, from ancient to modern times; and has also to add to this that acquired by his own exertions and those of his coworkers. Hence the first argument in favor of the old school, the argument of antiquity, of a time honored system, seems to be without any practical bearing upon the question.

Therefore we leave this point to inquire what are the real claims of this school as a science; for certainly it performs many cures, and is in possession of a system of medicine which in practical detail has probably been of much service to fallen humanity. But that system is one of experience, which experience is only valuable in similar cases. when something different, something new arises, as will continually arise in disease, it is then of no avail;

Then the vast amount of
experience is inapplicable
and nearly useless, and
nothing can then be done
but to make a new experi-
ment upon the person who
is suffering from a new
form of disease, and needs
the assistance of science.
instead of being himself
called upon to contribute
to her stores, But the case
is desperate and the experi-
ment must be made;
and should not the pa-
tient survive the operation
he dies secundum artem, a martyr to sci-
ence; and though his

memory may not be cherished as such, by the world at large yet it certainly is by the good doctor, who has learned by his death a most important fact, that a certain drug will not cure a certain disease. But on the contrary does the patient recover, the doctor has made a most brilliant cure, he has conferred a great blessing upon community, and made a valuable addition to the page of science. The remedy is published abroad, and set down in

the medical books as a sure cure for a diseased condition called by a certain name ——

Thus the materia medica is constructed upon this fallacious basis— the effect of remedies upon the sick— when it is utterly impossible to distinguish between the effect of the medicine and the product of the disease, Hence the therapeutics of this school are ever changing and however popular an established treatment for a certain disease may be at present we have no assurance that it will

remain so in future,
for the disease still called
by the same name, may
become really different
and the treatment in-
applicable, when a new
experimentation must
be gone through with, and
another revolution pro-
duced in the treatment.

Doctor Watson in speak-
ing of the different varieties
of fever says: "Admitting
that fever shows itself
under these various forms,
I am persuaded that the
effect upon the mind of
all this is bad and hurtful
It encourages a disposition

already too prevalent.
to prescribe for a disease
according to its name.
There is no line of genu-
ine distinction between
continued fevers that
can be relied on, they
run insensibly into each
other even the most dissim-
ilar of them and are fun
traceable to the same con-
tagion" Then if a dis-
ease even when reproduced by a specific contagion, may present itself
under these various
forms, which are so
dissimilar why attempt
to treat it by name?

Why attempt to treat it as it was treated in a previous century because that treatment was then successful? Should we not rather, with a correct pathological knowledge, treat it according to the form now presented, or in other words according to the symptoms. But this the prevailing school are unable to do, because the action of remedies is known only in certain diseased conditions, and they have no assurance that the cases are

exactly similar —

Thus without any permanent indications for the use of remedies the therapeutics of this school have been drifting and changing for more than 2 000 years, through a progressive period, and with a confessedly progressive system. and what are the results of today? Why there has been much improvement made in the treatment of disease, Medical men have pushed their researches into the mysterious and almost hidden

operations of Nature, and have discovered something of her modus operandi in all her minute and elaborate economy.

They have gone far in obtaining a correct knowledge of the functions of nearly every organ throughout the whole system. But notwithstanding this increased amount of knowledge, so far as the application of drugs to a diseased organism is concerned, this system still lacks the essentials of science, which we have said is knowledge reduced

to order, so as to be of convenient application and reference. Can this be found in the materia medica we have been considering? It is true a certain kind of knowledge may be found there, and in alphabetical order, but practically in a grand confusion, and with an almost impossibility of being correctly applied. Then since uncertainty, irregularity, and confusion do not constitute a science, if we turn to a school whose principles are

directly opposite, we shall of necessity find the exact counterpart of these elements, which do constitute a science.

We shall find that each drug has a particular affinity for, and action upon, ~~the~~ a certain organ or set of organs, upon certain tissues, nerves, and structure; which action is known and established. We shall also find that this school is in possession of a law for the application of medicine to a diseased condition, which is as uniform

and immutable as the action of drugs upon the healthy tissues, Here then are the very elementary principles ~~which~~ of science, which have been found wanting for so long a time in the medical school, These are the foundation stones, upon which the whole superstructure, of the great fabric, of a scientific system of medicine is reared, Here the Genius of Medicine which methinks has hitherto bewailed her uncertain and circuitous course, may find the first resting place, upon her long and toilsome journey

Here she may step upon the platform of truth, and be safe from the drifting sand of the Sahara that is whirling, and tossing around her. From this stand-point, she may overlook the changing, bewildering elements, which hitherto have obscured her pathway, and view a guiding star, by which to shape her future course ——— ——— ———

But they tell us this is all delusion, the product of a crazed brain. If so, happy were it for suffering humanity

were all men lunatics,
and the whole would an
asylum. But we are to
examine this lunacy
in scientific comparison
with the so called "rational"
treatment, And the first
proposition of the former
is that drugs have a
specific action upon
the healthy tissues, and
that this action, is
known and established.
We know first, that
they have an action because
we have often witnessed their
effect; and secondly, that
this action is established
and uniform, from the

combined testimony of medical men, of undoubted veracity and character, at the present time, and during the last 60 years, who have tested the actions of drugs during health, and given that action in the fullest detail. So that at the present time we have more than 200 remedies, the action of which is established by the best of evidence. The second proposition is, that a medicine is capable of curing a disease, which is precisely similar to

that produced by the drug in the healthy tissues —

We have the action of the drug in health, in the history of its proving and in similar cases of disease, from remedific influences. we have but to make the trial, to demonstrate the truth of the proposition —

This trial has been made, and is being made continually, and the truth is demonstrated beyond contradiction, Besides we have again the combined testimony of medical

men, and medical literature, of both schools, with which to prove this truth, For if we examine the toxicological history of any drug, in the materia medica of either school, we shall see that it cures in every-day practice, similar conditions to those which it produces in the healthy —

It is hardly necessary to enumerate instances to illustrate this point, No one who has ever seen a case of poisoning from Belladonna, will deny that it was a facsimile of some form or stage of scarlatina; nor will any one deny that this is one of the specific remedial agents, in the

treatment of this disease in both schools. This is also the case with sulphur in itch, mercury in syphilis, and so onward through the whole materia medica. Conceding then these two points to be established medicine is reduced as nearly as possible to an exact science.

For in the truth and application of these two principles, is uniformity, certainty, success, and — science. It is true that what might be called the collateral doctrines of Homoeopathy, are also of importance —

For instance, it is found that when a perfectly Homoeopathic remedy is selected, the dose

should be very small, ~~perhaps~~ on account of the morbid susceptability of the organs and tissues which are invaded by the disease, and upon which, as has been shown, the medicine has a specific action. As in a case of acute ophthalmia, the morbid susceptability of the organ involved may be so great, that the continued action of a single ray of light, would destroy the eye. Under these circumstances what quantity of medicine should be given which has been proven to act specifically upon this organ. If millions of these rays of light, are too minute, to be weighed by the most exquisit

scales even produced, and yet one of them will produce so fatal an aggravation of the disease in question, may not a drug be reduced even infinitesimally, and yet produce its curative effect, This is a sufficient explanation also of the reason why a person in health, may take a considerable quantity of a Homoeopathic remedy, without injury, because the remedy has been attenuated sufficiently, to have a proper action upon diseased, and consequently highly sensative tissues, and is not prepared to effect healthy organs, which are capable

of throwing off all ordinary morbific influences, and hence also capable of resisting a medicinal influence of equal intensity — — —

When these doctrines, and their natural corollaries are carried out in their generalization, and detail, combined into a system of medicine, and labelled Homœopathy, is it not a science, par excellence, —

It is certainly founded and constructed upon scientific principles theoretically, and practical demonstration proves it true, — — —

What then have the

self-styled "regular physicians" to present in opposition to this, which entitles them to a monopoly of science.

Is it their materia medica, comprised of uncertain symptoms, and indications for the use of remedies, gathered at the bedside of the sick, and dying? This they know is empiricism, and their best men have confessed it. Debat says "We cannot yet unhappily, construct therapeutics on the basis of scientific medicine, and with the best intentions in the world we can regard the greater part of its precepts

but as the result of empiricism".

Where then is the student of medicine, to look for the most inviting field upon which to bestow his future labors

Is he to battle with disease in the same manner that his ancestors have done for more than 2000 years; and still the monster keeps one or more, of his hydra heads beyond the known action of their therapeutics? No. If he would look for the field of greatest usefulness, in medicine — if he would have an

scientific a knowledge of the-
apeutics, that he can literally
forestall Disease, and be always
ready for an attack, in any
of his various forms; he must
commence with the proving
of drugs while in health.

Here this field is truly the
world, and his labors
will contribute towards
the development, and perfection, of a
system of medicine, which when
fully completed, will
be of sufficient scope, to
embrace all the healing
remedies which Nature
has elaborated, and
to ameliorate all the ills
that flesh is heir to".